## Wisconsin

### **Department of Workforce Development**

# 2001 - 2003 Biennial Report



Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
Office of the Secretary

October 2003

Roberta Gassman Secretary



#### OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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October 22, 2003

The Honorable Jim Doyle Office of the Governor 115 East, State Capitol Madison, WI 53702

#### Dear Governor Doyle:

I am pleased to provide you with the enclosed biennial report for the Department of Workforce Development for the biennium ending June 30, 2003.

This past biennium has presented many challenges for the department, including building upon the successes of the W-2 program, employing efforts to better serve people with disabilities, confronting a growing labor shortage in some economic sectors while faced with the loss of jobs in others, particularly in manufacturing, with the state facing a \$3.2 billion dollar deficit.

This report is a testament to the efforts and dedication of all DWD employees who have worked hard at addressing these issues and will continue to work hard as we strive for a healthier, stronger economy as we 'grow Wisconsin.'

Sincerely,

Roberta Gassman

Secretary



This report is available on the department's website at <a href="http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dwd/biennial.htm">http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dwd/biennial.htm</a>

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#### **Department of Workforce Development Overview**

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is the state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce. The Department of Workforce Development was created in 1996 from the former Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations (DILHR) and two programs from the former Department of Health and Human Services.

The creation of DWD meant specifically Wisconsin was merging its vocational rehabilitation and welfare reform programs with its other workforce programs, which are focused on working with employers and employees on job training, finding jobs, unemployment programs, running the state workers' compensation program for large and small companies, providing labor market information, and protecting and enforcing workers' rights. Several of these programs are delivered through the one- stop Job Center system in coordination with many employment-related partners. The department focuses on providing a single, comprehensive employment and training system for Wisconsin job seekers and employers.

The department is led by Secretary Roberta Gassman, appointed by Governor Jim Doyle in January 2003. The department consists of five program divisions and an administrative services division. The department has two entities, the Labor and Industry Review Commission and the Governor's Work Based Learning Board, attached administratively.

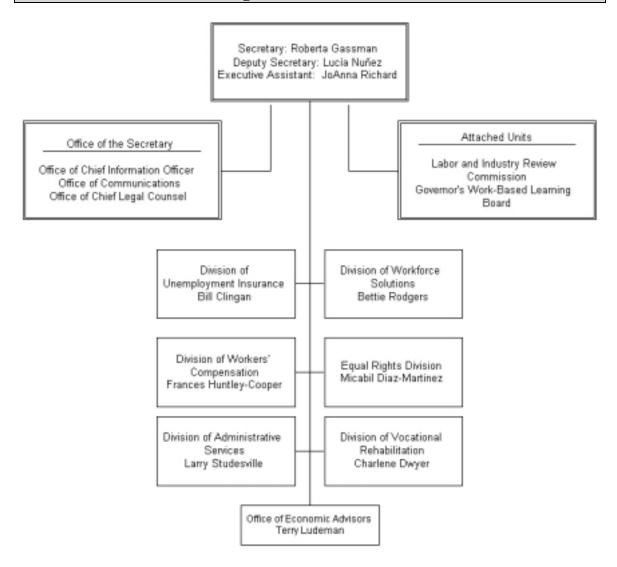
The department has 2,100 employees and an annual budget exceeding 1.2 billion dollars.

Recent significant structural changes to the department included:

- eliminating the Wisconsin Conservation Corp (WCC) an administratively attached entity;
- assuming responsibility for investigation and hearing of cases against the State as an employer, formerly done by the Personnel Commission; and
- eliminating the state legislative liaison positions.

DWD has recently created the Office of Economic Advisors (OEA), reporting to the Secretary, to tap the expertise of economists throughout state agencies to advise the Governor and other executive branch agencies on economic trends and labor forecasting. The office will assist in the development of metrics that will measure and report on the progress of the Governor's economic development initiatives.

#### **DWD Organization – October 2003**



The Office of the Secretary oversees the Department of Workforce Development. The Department of Workforce Development provides training and employment assistance to people looking for work; works with employers to fill job openings; helps the disabled secure employment; links youth with jobs; protects and enforces workers' rights; administers Wisconsin's apprenticeship program; pays Unemployment Insurance claims; and, administers Workers Compensation.

#### **Administrative Services Division**

The Administrative Services Division (ASD) provides a wide variety of services to DWD programs and employees. The division ensures that department policies and budgetary issues are identified and analyzed, and that policy recommendations are appropriate, coordinated, and consistent with departmental goals and objectives. The division also provides centralized human resource, payroll, financial accounting, purchasing, facilities management, training, health & safety, information technology, and administrative support services.

#### **Division of Workforce Solutions**

The Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) was created in February 2001 and merged the prior divisions of Workforce Excellence and Economic Support. The mission of the division is to provide a seamless continuum of services accessed by employers, members of the workforce and their families. DWS manages several workforce programs including apprenticeship, child care subsidy and quality improvement programs, child support, dislocated worker services, job service, labor market information, migrant labor, welfare to work, refugee services, Wisconsin Works (W-2), and federal Workforce Investment Act programs, including overseeing Wisconsin's one-stop Job Center System.

#### **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides employment services to people with disabilities. The goal of DVR is to maximize the employment and earning potential of people with disabilities who experience barriers to work. DVR counselors, who are located in most of Wisconsin's 78 Job Centers, work in partnership with qualified individuals who want to obtain, retain, regain or improve their employment. DVR serves over 21,000 people with disabilities each month and works closely with employers to assist them in including people with disabilities in their workforce and diversity plans.

#### **Division of Unemployment Insurance**

The Division of Unemployment Insurance (UI) is responsible for the management of the Unemployment Insurance Program which provides temporary economic assistance to Wisconsin's unemployed workers, ensuring program integrity and providing legislative and customer relations.

The division is responsible for:

- UI benefit payment programs through an integrated network of call centers
- Wisconsin's Quarterly Wage Reporting program
- Wisconsin's New Hire Reporting program
- Benefit fraud and overpayment detection and prosecution
- Depositing all UI tax receipts, maintaining employer accounts, collecting delinquent UI taxes, penalties, overpayments and conducting field audits
- Providing legal services for the division, holding hearings of appealed UI claims, and conducing research and analysis on UI policy issues

#### **Workers' Compensation Division**

The Workers' Compensation (WC) Division effectively and efficiently:

- ♦ Promotes healthy, safe work environments
- ♦ Maintains a balanced system of services
- ◆ Ensures compliance with the provisions of the Wisconsin Workers' Compensation Act

The division ensures the prompt payment of benefits by private insurance companies and self-insured employers to workers who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses, and resolves appeals regarding claims.

#### **Equal Rights Division**

Equal Rights Division (ERD) is responsible for:

- Protecting the rights of all people in Wisconsin under civil rights and labor standards laws;
- ◆ Achieving compliance through education, outreach, and enforcement by empowered and committed employees;
- Performing all duties and responsibilities with reasonableness, efficiency, and fairness.

The division enforces statewide laws that prohibit discrimination and regulate labor standards in the work place. These laws impact all of Wisconsin's five million citizens. The division administers its laws by setting guidelines, through education of the public, and through the complaint driven investigative process. Specific laws administered by the division include public accommodation, minimum wage, prevailing wage, proper hours and conditions of work, family and medical leave, and discrimination of protected classes.

#### **Administratively Attached Units**

#### **Labor and Industry Review Commission**

The Labor and Industry Review Commission (LIRC) is an independent administrative agency which decides appeals in cases involving Unemployment Insurance (UI), Workers' Compensation (WC), and Equal Rights (ER).

LIRC is composed of three members who are appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate, and who serve staggered 6-year terms.

#### Governor's Work Based Learning Board

The 1999-01 state biennial budget created the Governor's Work-Based Learning Board (GWBLB) to administer and coordinate Wisconsin's school-to-work system, including youth apprenticeship, technical preparation, and other work-based learning programs. The Board is attached to the Department of Workforce Development for administrative purposes.

The GWBLB is associated with the following programs included in the state budget:

- ♦ Local Youth Apprenticeship Program
- ♦ School-To-Work
- Work-Based Learning Programs in Wisconsin
- ◆ Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Technical Education Act of 1998, Title II Technical Preparation Programs (Tech Prep)

#### **Internal Structure and Department Management**

#### Office of the Secretary

The Office of the Secretary is responsible for day-to-day management of the entire department. This includes promoting the department's mission to provide a system of employment-focused programs and services that enables individuals and employers to fully participate in Wisconsin's economy.

The Office of the Secretary includes:

#### **Secretary**

Appointed by the Governor, the Secretary works in close cooperation with all cabinet members, state agencies, the legislature, outside organizations and interest groups to ensure the department's overall mission and goals provide value to the citizens of Wisconsin.

#### **Deputy Secretary**

♦ The Deputy Secretary is responsible for the day-to-day internal operations of the department, including resolution of all critical issues, the department's budget and oversight of major contracts. The Deputy Secretary serves as a surrogate for the Secretary.

#### **Executive Assistant**

♦ The Executive Assistant serves the Secretary and is the primary contact for various external inter-governmental agency functions. The Executive Assistant also acts the agency legislative liaison.

#### Office of Chief Legal Counsel

◆ The responsibility of the Chief Legal Counsel is to provide legal services for the department.

#### **Office of Communications**

♦ The responsibility of the Communications Office is to ensure that the department responds to requests for information from the news media in an accurate, timely, and comprehensive fashion. The Office also works with each of the divisions to publicize the many programs, innovations, achievements and issues being handled at DWD.

#### Office of the Chief Information Office (CIO)

♦ The mission of the Office of the CIO is to assist DWD in successfully selecting and managing IT projects and to aid business operations in achieving their business missions and outcomes.

#### Office of Economic Advisors (OEA)

♦ The newly created Office of Economic Advisors utilizes the expertise of economists throughout state agencies to advise the Governor and other executive branch agencies on economic trends and labor forecasting. The office will assist in the development of metrics that will measure and report on the progress of the Governor's economic development initiatives.

**Administrative Services Division** 

DWD has one division dedicated to department management. The Administrative Services Division provides administrative support services to the program divisions, including human resources, procurement, facilities management, training, communications, budget and fiscal operations, information technology, strategic planning, purchasing and printing.

#### **Administrative Services Division**

#### Mission

To work for the success of the Secretary's Office and DWD program divisions by providing efficient and cost-effective administrative support systems and services that best satisfy the department's needs.

#### **Business Services**

The Administrative Services Division provides a wide variety of customer-focused, central support services to the Secretary's Office, DWD programs, staff and DWD partner agencies. Though few outside DWD ever come into contact with this division with the exception of the Human Resource Services Bureau, its role is vital to the successful operation of the department.

The division is organized into the bureaus of Budget and Planning, General Services, Finance, Information Technology Services, and Human Resource Services.

The Administrative Services Division provides:

- ♦ Policy analysis
- ♦ Budget analysis
- ♦ Biennial budget development
- ♦ Internal operating budget implementation
- ♦ Human resource management
- ♦ Payroll
- ♦ Financial accounting
- **♦** Purchasing
- Facilities management
- ♦ Information technology and telecommunications
- ♦ Central coordination of department administrative processes

#### Accomplishments 2001 - 2003

- ♦ Completed conversion to the State's central accounting system, WiSMART and a new financial data warehouse system, which saved an estimated \$820,000 in operating costs the first year.
- Put fleet vehicle reductions in place, with projected savings of \$250,000/year.
- ♦ Finished a four-year renovation project in GEF-1 costing approximately \$21 million dollars.
- ♦ Implemented space management initiatives in the Madison area, resulting in a savings of \$600,000/year.
- ♦ Reduced Bureau of Child Support KIDS operating costs by over \$1 million dollars through software performance improvements (\$280,000) and performing quality assurance on vendor invoices (\$825,000).

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- Reduce reliance on outsourced contractors for the KIDS child support system, with an ultimate goal of saving \$4,600,000 in the 03-05 biennium.
- Coordinate department efforts to implement legislated mandates and commitments.
- ♦ Work at a state level to address federally mandated Limited English Proficiency requirements.
- ◆ Assist DOA with the implementation of a statewide Payroll Time and Attendance system.
- Improve Employee Assistance Program services to all DWD employees statewide.
- ♦ Identify and take action on opportunities to improve department-wide administrative processes and reduce the total cost of administrative overhead.
- ♦ Develop and implement a plan to increase employee and managerial skills to support department succession planning efforts.

#### **Division of Workforce Solutions**

On February 1, 2001 the Department of Workforce Development merged the Division of Economic Support (DES) and the Division of Workforce Excellence (DWE) into the new Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). The merger created a single division to focus on key workforce issues including: alleviating the workforce shortage, building a skilled workforce, integrating workforce issues with economic development issues, and taking W-2 to the next level of helping people retain and advance in their jobs.

#### Mission

Provide a seamless continuum of services accessed by employers, and members of the workforce and their families with the following results:

- Employers have the workers they need.
- Individuals and families achieve economic self-sufficiency by accessing quality support services, making sound employment decisions, and maximizing their workforce potential.
- ♦ All children have the financial support they need from both parents.

DWS administers programs and services that involve: child care assistance; child support collections; Wisconsin Works (W-2); Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA); Workforce Investment Act (WIA); Welfare to Work (WtW); apprenticeship; dislocated worker services; Job Service and JobNet; Migrant, Refugee and Labor Services; immigrant integration services and other employee and employer services such as: employment and training; transportation; and, labor market research and data analysis. DWS also is responsible for the on-going development of Wisconsin's workforce through the one-stop Job Center delivery system.

#### **Programs**

#### Child Care Assistance

The Child Care program provides low-income families access to affordable, quality child care through the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program. Child care subsidy program recipients increased nearly 14%, from 44,788 children in 25,319 low-income families in June 2001 to 51,041 children in 29,111 low-income families in June 2003. The program continues to serve approximately 30% of the eligible population. Through the UMOS and migrant child program an additional 1300 children were served over the biennium.

#### Accomplishments

♦ The Child Care subsidy program operated throughout the biennium serving all eligible families who applied. No waiting lists or any other program limitations were necessary. By the end of the biennium, the subsidy program budget was more than \$305 million annually. Looking ahead, the subsidy budget for SFY2004 is \$298.6 million and in SFY2005 it increases to \$308 million.

- ♦ DWD was awarded a three-year, \$250,000/year federal grant to develop a merged statewide data base of all regulated child care providers. In partnership with several other agencies, DWD will build a new system which will be used for a variety of programmatic and research purposes, most notably to improve the quality of referrals for parents seeking the best child care available.
- ♦ Efforts to improve the quality and supply included \$84.8 million in the 2001-2003 budget. Some of these initiatives over the biennium included:
  - a \$8.0 million scholarship program to help the child care workforce improve their qualifications. To date, over 2300 scholarships have been awarded to child care providers in 68 counties providing early care and education for over 107,000 Wisconsin children in over 11,200 programs.
  - a \$4.0 million R.E.W.A.R.D.<sup>TM</sup> Stipend program awarded to 4,788 child care providers for education and longevity in early care and education in 70 counties.
  - a \$2.7 million Early Childhood Excellence Initiative in SFY2004 continuing early learning centers in 32 locations showed that child care quality increased significantly over time.
  - a \$42.4 million matching grants program to 103 jurisdictions in 62 counties received funding to improve the quality and supply of child care.
  - 17 Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies funded with \$2.7 million served 26,448 families in 72 counties and 11 tribes.
  - a \$1.9 training and technical assistance program that funded several agencies including the Child Care Information Center (CCIC) that filled 13,087 requests for information by designing individualized training packets on a variety of child care issues and by distributing brochures and articles and loaning books and videos about child care. Together with the Registry CCIC developed an electronic training calendar.
  - Development of the Early Learning Standards that will provide a guide to curriculum development and are intended to be used as guidance for families, educators, administrators and policymakers on the knowledge and skills that are expected of children upon kindergarten completions.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- ♦ The Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program is engaged in a year-long project to migrate its automated system to a web platform.
- ♦ The Child Care Scholarship, mentoring and Bonus programs will receive \$6.3 million funding in each year for the next biennium.
- Continued funding for the child care pass-through fund, which offers grants to local government agencies that provide match dollars.
- ♦ Continue the Early Childhood Excellence Initiative which will receive \$5.0 million for the next biennium at 31 child care facilities throughout the state.
- ♦ Continued funding of CCR&R agency system and support for other quality initiatives.

#### **Child Support Collections**

The state's child support program contracts with 71 Wisconsin counties and two tribes to provide paternity and child support order establishment and enforcement to 341,000 families. In addition, the child support program receives and mails support-related payments to 432,000 families.

#### **Accomplishments**

- Collected \$1.83 billion in the last biennium in child support-related payments.
- ♦ Gained national top ten ranking for:
  - Collections per full-time employee.
  - Collections per case and per order for support.
  - Percent of all cases with collections.
  - Total of all distributed collections; and the total amount distributed as current support.
  - Percent of IV-D non-marital births with IV-D paternity establishment.
- ◆ Improved collections resulting from the Lien Docket, license suspension, account seizure and vehicle liens -- \$ 13 million.
- Completed conversion of all Percentage Expressed Orders to fixed orders.
- ◆ Completed review of the Child Support Guidelines, drafted a revised DWD 40 administrative rule, held public hearings, and submitted revision to the Legislature for approval.
- ♦ Both the Menomonee and Lac du Flambeau Tribes receive direct funding from the federal government to administer the child support program and entered into service agreements with the Bureau of Child Support to provide KIDS and State Disbursement Unit (WI Support Collections Trust Fund) services.
- ♦ Received approval to continue the waiver to "pass through" 100 percent of child support to W-2 families until September 2005.
- Completed transfer of the receipting and disbursement of tax intercept collections to the State Disbursement Unit (SDU).
- ♦ Joined the federal "Big 10" states at the invitation of the Office of Child Support Enforcement in recognition of Wisconsin's high performance status.
- ♦ Implemented the National Medical Support Notice.
- ♦ Expanded the lien docket and lump sum intercept program to the State Employee Trust Fund.
- Expanded license suspension to the Division of Gaming and State Bar.
- ♦ Completed numerous security enhancements to KIDS, leading to resolution of recurring LAB Audit findings related to KIDS security.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- Continue the reconciliation of all former percentage expressed orders.
- Implement revised child support guidelines in DWD 40 Administrative Rule.
- Implement new contract for administration of the SDU.
- ♦ Achieve federal certification of the Kids Information Data System (KIDS).
- Transition KIDS operation and maintenance from IBM to DWD.
- Provide enhanced training to Child Support Agencies.

#### Wisconsin Works (W-2)

W-2 is a work and training program aimed at moving people off cash welfare rolls and into jobs, while providing necessary support services (including child care and transportation assistance, health care and case management services). As of June 2003, there were 10,654 cases receiving cash assistance, a significant decrease from initial implementation in September 1997 when there were approximately 40,000 cases.

#### Accomplishments

- ♦ As part of the evolution of the W-2 program, the department shifted the emphasis away from a "light touch" and "diversion" philosophy. This is reflected in many of the more recent changes in policy, the W-2 performance standards, and other forms of communication to W-2 agencies. However, remaining references to "light touch" and "diversion" in the W-2 Philosophical Statements and the W-2 Policy Manual made the program's priorities appear somewhat inconsistent. To remedy this the department removed all language pertaining to "light touch" and "diversion" from W-2 policy and a new W-2 philosophical statement emphasizing "informed choice" was developed and issued to W-2 agencies in 2002.
- ♦ In 2002, a web-based application was developed to track and monitor Emergency Assistance payments to eligible families.
- ♦ The policy governing case management placements for unemployed individuals capable of obtaining employment (CMS) was modified to require that the placement be reevaluated after 30 days. If the participant is unable to find unsubsidized employment within 30 days, the FEP must consider placing the individual in a Trial Job or a Community Service Job (CSJ) position.
- ♦ A W-2 agency may aggregate education and training hours, in order to allow W-2 T and CSJ participants access to short-term intensive training programs that require more than 10 or 12 hours of participation per week. The department revised the W-2 policy in February 2002 to increase an individual's permitted aggregated education and training hours from 258 hours in a six-month period to 516 hours over a one-year period. This policy change enhances opportunities for W-2 participants to access education and training.
- ♦ A work plan centering on screening and assessment was implemented early in 2001 that strengthened the focus on assessment in W-2 policy, performance standards, and W-2 agencies' program plans. Also under this initiative, work began to develop the Barrier Screening Tool (BST). Developed with the assistance of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Center for Addiction and Behavioral Health Research, the BST is a combination of screening tools that look at a participants ability to function in activities of daily living and in the workplace. The BST was pilot-tested in the field in 2002 and implemented statewide through a web-based application between May and July 2003.
- ♦ Staffed the Secretary's Transitional Jobs Taskforce that met from March to August 2003, provided information to help them in their deliberations and drafted their recommendations report to the Secretary.

- ♦ The department received a \$1 million grant from the Federal Department of Labor to implement a paid training and education program for former foster youth. The program will provide a \$500 monthly stipend, supportive services and case management to youth between the ages of 16 and 21 who are transitioning out of the foster care system and are participating in GED, high school, technical college programs, or other job skills training.
- ◆ Provided information on W-2 and TANF-related programs to visitors from Canada, Germany, Korea, England, Mexico, Japan, Netherlands, Italy, and Hungary.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- ◆ Implementation of the new Transitional Jobs component of W-2 by April 1, 2004, as a demonstration project in Fond du Lac and Milwaukee Counties. Transitional Jobs is a new component of the W-2 program. It provides participants with a placement in paid employment. W-2 participants will work with an "intermediary" who will serve as the employer of record and match participants with worksites. The intermediary will receive a subsidy equal to up to 30 hours per week at minimum wage. Participants will be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Participants may also receive additional services, such as financial literacy, mentoring (work and/or community based), and services designed to assist them to balance work and family.
- Revision of the BST to include family needs questions to look at special needs of other family members and how those needs impact the participant's ability to work.
- ♦ Updated performance standards for the 2004-2005 W-2 Contracts. This involves:
  - utilizing the Unemployment Insurance Wage Information for measuring Earnings Gain, Job Retention and Entered Employment of all W-2 and FSET participants.
  - implementing a new information only performance standard related to the Barrier Screening Tool. This will involve measuring the completed assessments from the Barrier Screening Tool, and determining whether or not the agency follows through with the formal assessments that are indicated from the results from completed Barrier Screenings.

#### Wisconsin Advancement and Attachment (WAA)

The Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA) Program offers services designed to promote upward mobility for low-income working families and non-custodial parents (NCPs). The WAA program provides job retention and training services, to improve employment stability and advancement to higher wage levels. It helps promote job retention and skill development while simultaneously meeting employers' needs for skilled workers. Services include: job readiness and placement for the unemployed; basic skills development; job retention services; worker training to promote job advancement and increased earnings; and services to employers to retain workers and provide career progression paths.

#### **Accomplishments**

- Number of WAA participants completing WAA program activities: 5,868
- ♦ WAA's Employment Performance Standard: those who entered the WAA program unemployed and left the program employed: 45.3%
- ♦ WAA's Job Retention Performance Standard: those who came into program employed left the program employed: 77.5%
- WAA program participants increased their monthly earnings by \$487.04
- ♦ To date, 8,008 people participated in statewide WAA programs. This includes 1,070 non-custodial parents and those served by W-2 agencies and Workforce Development Boards.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- Wisconsin counties and workforce development boards serve as a resource for employers to maintain stable employment environments for those in the TANF population. Agencies will assist employers with recruitment, retention and orientation sessions to add additional positions within businesses at a higher paying wage.
- ♦ Some counties will subcontract services and training programs that assist WAA participants to develop computer skills according to participant needs.
- ♦ Counties and WDBs provide cultural competency and/or diversity training to employers with high Hispanic populations to decrease turnover rates.

#### Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

WIA was implemented in July 2000 upon approval of a five-year strategic plan to operate unified One Stop Job Service/Job Center systems monitored by workforce development boards (WDBs). WIA provides employment and training services for low-income people and replaced the Job Training Partnership Act (JTOA) June 30, 2001.

#### Accomplishments

- ♦ With guidance from the Council on Workforce Investment (CWI), DWD/DWS developed and implemented four new grant programs using the Governor's WIA discretionary (set-aside) funds.
  - The Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program provided incentives to employers to institute or continue programs to address the skill/education requirements of the existing workforce and workplace restructuring efforts. Sixty grants, totaling \$906,673 in WIA funds (in combination with employer match funds) enabled

    49 employers to provide needed work-based training/education to over
    - 49 employers to provide needed work-based training/education to over 3,000 workers.
  - Labor Force Expansion Training/Education Program provided training and related services to minimally employed or unemployed adults and youth with significant employment barriers to assist them in gaining, retaining or advancing in employment in high demand occupations. Grant funds supported three separate programs. The first was a business/education partnership that served atrisk high school students to prepare them for jobs in high demand jobs in manufacturing. The second, a desktop publishing certificate program for at-risk

- youth, including minority women, provided specialized career planning, preemployment skills building and on-the job mentoring. Finally, a Skills Enhancement Program assisted unemployed and minimally employed adults, including adults with limited English proficiency, to secure/advance in high demand occupations in the healthcare industry.
- The Workforce Partnership Enhancement Program provided funds (totaling \$440,000) to each of Wisconsin's 11 WDBs to promote board leadership development and market the workforce development system. The boards undertook a number of activities, among them strategic planning, analysis of industry clusters, improved interaction with economic development and other entities, sponsorship of business development and regional industry sector conferences, and Job Center marketing.
- Capacity Building for Performance Improvement Program grants (totaling \$350,000) to each of the 11 WDBs to support system capacity building/technical assistance to improve WIA program performance in the context of improvement in performance results; and implementing innovative service delivery models to improve performance, including improved coordination.
- The Federal Department of Labor awarded the department \$200,000 in WIA demonstration funds to implement the Working Family Training Subsidy pilot program to help low-income workers receive necessary training to advance in their jobs. DWD added WtW funds to the WIA funds to award funding to two agencies. The funding allows eligible low-income workers to receive a cash subsidy of \$341 per month, so that they can work part-time and receive training part-time.
- Under the direction of the CWI, DWD/DWS planned and implemented two leadership development training sessions for WDBs (October 2001 and October 2002). Over 50 state and local Board members (including private sector members) and staff from across the state participated in each of the sessions. DWD/DWS also provided training to DWD staff who are either on local WDBs or serve as DWD liaisons to local Boards.
- ♦ Reengineered the WIA automated program information system to create the Automated System Supporting Employment and Training (ASSET). This new system supports data collection, program management, and federal reporting on WIA program participants and WIA program performance. It was put into operation on April 1, 2003; implementation was accompanied by major efforts to train workforce development system staff in using the new system (including development of an online users guide and on-site training). The new system marks a major improvement in the ability of DWD/DWS and its local WDB partners to track and manage WIA performance results
- Negotiated new statewide WIA performance standards for Program Years 2004 and 2005 with the US DOL as well as new local performance standards for each of the 11 WDBs. DWD/DWS also submitted a modification to Wisconsin's WIA Five Year Plan to incorporate these new standards.
- Completed an assessment of Wisconsin's Job Center system. The study "Assessment of Wisconsin's Job Center Network After a Decade of Development", which included site visits and interviews with job center leadership and state/local partners across the

state, examined a range of issues, among them "common vision", funding system, administrative structures, and accessibility to services/service consistency. Findings from the study formed the basis for statewide dialogues and continuing internal efforts to improve Wisconsin's workforce development service delivery system and more effectively integrate TANF programs within Wisconsin's statewide Job Center network.

◆ Awarded a \$2.6 million performance incentive grant from the US Department of Labor in early 2002. Wisconsin became eligible for the grant for exceeding state performance goals in a one year period ending June 2000 for three federally funded programs: WIA Employment and Training programs (WIA, Title I), Adult/Family Literacy (WIA Title II), and Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. DWD/DWS and Wisconsin Technical College State Board (WTCSB) jointly planned and implemented the grant program, which focuses on building a skilled workforce for the healthcare industry and increasing basic education and English language skills of Wisconsin citizens who are not adequately prepared for the modern workplace. Through the joint efforts of DWD/DWS and WTCSB, five grants (administered by the WTCSB) were awarded to regional WDB/Technical College partnerships to increase training and strengthen ongoing partnerships between the technical college system and workforce development/job center system.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- ◆ DWD/DWS is implementing a WIA Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) plan directed to improving statewide and local WIA performance standards. Plan activities are funded by both PY 02 WIA Governor's Discretionary (set-aside) funds and through a request to US DOL Region V for federal TAT funds. The plan includes statewide TAT activities geared to state and local WIA administrative and service delivery staff. It focuses on the new ASSET, youth program functions needed to improve WIA youth performance standards (youth roundtables), WIA case management training, a WIA performance standards conference, an Earnings and Career Advancement Symposium, on-line WIA program and performance management training, and a WIA Performance Accountability Technical Assistance web page. In addition, each WDB will receive funds to implement a locally designed TAT program specific to the region's performance improvement needs.
- ♦ DWD will be working with the Governor's Office to appoint new members to the Council on Workforce Investment and to ensure its connection to the Governor's Economic Growth Council and the Governor's Grow Wisconsin initiative. Within this context DWD/DWS will also be exploring ways in which WIA state and local funds can be more strategically directed to workforce training.
- ◆ DWD/DWS will begin assessing the impact of and planning for implementation of new requirements in the WIA program when a final WIA Reauthorization bill passes Congress and is signed by the President. (Passage of a WIA reauthorization may occur in late 2003.)
- ♦ DWD/DWS will continue to work on improving the job center system, including improving integration of WIA and TANF funded programs.

#### Welfare To Work (WtW)

The Welfare to Work (WtW) program was established by the federal Balanced Budget Act of 1997. Funded by TANF block grant funds, but administered federally by the US Department of Labor, the program assists the hardest to employ welfare recipients and non-custodial parents who face great challenges to employment, to move into unsubsidized jobs and economic self-sufficiency. The program objectives include job placement, job retention, increased earnings and increased child support collections. US DOL provided 2 WtW grants -- a FFY 1998 grant of \$12,885,951, which ended on June 30, and a FFY 1999 grant of \$12,032,182, which ends June 30, 2004. A 50% match of non-federal funds is required. Eighty five percent of WtW funds are allocated to local WDBs; the remaining 15% are retained at the state level for administrative and discretionary projects.

#### Accomplishments

- ◆ Increased total WtW participants served from June 30, 2002 (520 participants) to June 30, 2003 (1,214 participants).
- ♦ Updated *Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Program Guide*, in August of 2003, for program providers' use in administering delivery of the WtW program services. Updates included minor edits throughout the guide and significant changes to two chapters on the WtW eligibility and case processing. The updated version of the guide was electronically sent to the WtW service providers and was posted on the DWD Internet web site.
- ◆ Provided WtW eligibility, case management and CARES database training to program service providers in May, June and July of 2003.
- ♦ Monitored and evaluated WtW Program management of discretionary grantees/agencies.
- ♦ Generated quarterly WtW enrollments activities reports for incorporating into financial status reports for USDOL.

#### **Upcoming Initiative**

• Finalizing closeout of FFY 1998 WtW Program funds.

#### **Worker Services**

#### Apprenticeship

The apprenticeship program offers quality services and strong partnerships with industry, labor, education and government to produce highly skilled and trained apprenticeship graduates.

#### Accomplishments

- ♦ In 01/02/02, Wisconsin had 12,777 and 3,295 employers sponsoring apprenticeship programs. As of 01/02/03, 3,271 employers sponsoring 12,299 apprentices.
- ◆ Certified 583 new employers as qualified apprenticeship sponsors in 2002-2003 and 439 became active employers with apprentices.
- Currently training apprentices in 313 occupations.
- Coordinated with 65 different schools to provide related instruction to apprentices.

- ♦ 555 different employer, employee and community-based associations participated in the apprenticeship community; including labor unions and employer associations.
- ♦ In FY 2002-2003 conducted 5,195 apprentice reviews and 941 employer reviews. Reviews are evaluations of the program by either the apprentice or the employer and used to measure the service to employers and apprentices based on their interaction with the program.
- ◆ Received a Child Care Grant of \$220,000 to develop an apprenticeship program for the Child Care Development Specialist. Currently, we are training apprentices in two different sites; Milwaukee and Madison.
- ♦ Received a grant of \$1.7 million from the Department of Labor to Expand Apprenticeship into new occupational areas. Wisconsin was selected to administer the grant on behalf of the Department of Labor. Wisconsin and five (5) other states have been selected to pilot in these other areas.
- ◆ Developed a Local Committee Technical Assistance Guide for Construction Local Committees. Forty-one technical assistance sessions were held for over 1,000 local committee members.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- ◆ Develop an Apprenticeship program for inmates/residents with the Department of Corrections. The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards is working with the Department of Corrections to develop apprenticeship programs in two areas; culinary arts (cook/chef) and dental technician. The culinary arts program will first be implemented at the Oshkosh Correctional Institution and dental technician will be implemented at the Taycheedah Correctional Institutional.
- ♦ The Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards received a grant from the US DOL to develop apprenticeship programs in new occupational areas health care and social service. In health care three occupations sill be developed: surgical technologist, medical coder/biller and medical diagnostic technologist. In the social service area, two occupations will be developed: probation & parole agent (with the Department of Corrections) and financial & employment planners (within our department).

#### **Dislocated Worker Services**

The Dislocated Workers program provides services to workers who lost their jobs due to layoff or business closure. The goal of this program is to help workers to become reemployed at or above the wage level of employment previously held. Services include assistance in bridging the gap between unemployment and employment.

#### Accomplishments

- Invited more than 165,000 UI Claimants to 68 Job Fairs held throughout the state.
- ♦ Held 368 Rapid Response orientations to over 18,000 workers in response to dislocation events.
- ♦ DWD was awarded more than \$10.7 million in National Emergency funding from the U.S. Department of Labor to assist dislocated workers as a result of applications submitted on their behalf.
- ♦ More than 56,000 Dislocated workers were served through UI Profiling (a series of services to increase the likelihood of obtaining meaningful employment again), Workforce Investment Act and Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs.

#### **Upcoming Initiative**

◆ To enhance benefits to workers displaced because of foreign competition through new programs including the Health Coverage Tax Credit and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance.

#### Job Service/JobNet

The Job Service Bureau provides high quality public labor exchange and targeted program services to workers, job seekers, and employers in Wisconsin. With 78 Job Center locations across the state, Wisconsin is second to none in serving its citizens.

The One Stop Resource Center System provides access to services and resources such as W-2, housing, child care, transportation, employment opportunities, and JobNet, Wisconsin's automated computerized job order and referral system.

#### **Accomplishments 2002**

- 136,740 Registrants who received staff services, other than job referrals, were hired.
- ♦ 3,539,446 JobNet System Accesses via the Internet were made.
- ♦ 142,379 Job Openings were received from employers listing opportunities on JobNet.
- ♦ 6,311,553 Job Orders were viewed via JobNet in Job Centers.
- 31,218 Registrants who used JobNet Job Order Referral Information were hired.

#### **Accomplishments 2003**

- ♦ 4,420,084 JobNet System Accesses via the Internet were made.
- ♦ 127,021 Job Openings were received from employers listing opportunities on JobNet.
- ♦ 6,539,119 Job Orders were viewed via JobNet in Job Centers.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- ♦ Develop Criteria To Assess Bureau Job Center Investments And Priorities.
- ♦ Enhance Bureau Service Focus Areas And Strategies.
- Finalize Development Of The Job Order Quality Assurance Program.

#### Migrant, Refugee and Labor Services

The merger of the Bureau of Migrant Services and the Office of Refugee Services (BMRLS) became effective October 1, 2002. The newly created Bureau of Migrant, Refugee and Labor Services creates a focal point to coordinate services to all foreign born and their families, all migrant workers, and employers who hire foreign and/or Limited English Proficiency (LRP) workers.

The BMRLS continues to provide and contract all of the services previously offered by the Migrant and Refugee Services units. However, the mission of the BMRLS is more comprehensive than the sum of the two component units, enabling the Department of Workforce Development to effectively mobilize all of its services on behalf of these target populations through staff training and support for translation and interpretation services.

The BMRLS also serves employers more effectively by providing coordinated response to employers seeking to hire foreign born workers, providing them with qualified applicants, processing alien labor requirements and accurate information concerning required documentation, and best practices for hiring and retaining foreign born workers and migrants.

BMRLS administers migrant labor laws and assures that migrant housing in Wisconsin is free from health and safety hazards and enforces labor laws with respect to work agreements and contractors. Migrant Services monitors migrant worker access to labor exchange services.

#### **Accomplishments**

- Ensured that more than 6,000 migrant workers and their families had a safe place to live
- Annually inspected 120 migrant labor camps statewide and certified for occupancy.
- ♦ Guaranteed that more than 100 employers had workers available to harvest Wisconsin crops.
- Recovered nearly \$20,000 in back wages for some 61 migrant workers as a result of a payroll audit in a food processing plant.

#### **Immigrant Integration Services**

Coordinate state and local efforts to help refugees and other immigrants assimilate into the community as quickly as possible by contracting with local agencies to provide culturally competent services, including employment and training, economic development, youth, elderly, mental health, domestic violence, and health services.

- ♦ Administer income maintenance services for refugees, including cash and medical assistance.
- Provide technical assistance and advocacy to state and local agencies to help providers understand the languages and cultures of refugees and how to integrate refugees into communities.

#### Accomplishments

- ♦ The Bureau received more than \$6 million annually in grants to serve adults and youth.
- ♦ Helped more than 600 refugees gain employment.
- Assisted more than 1,000 refugees with citizenship services.
- Helped more than 325 small businesses start or expand, creating 461 jobs.
- Provided violence prevention and domestic abuse services to 1,437 women and men.
- Provided mental health services to more than 1,510 refugees.
- ♦ Helped 1,618 elderly refugees receive nutritious meals and nutrition education, citizenship, language training and community integration services.
- Helped more than 1,700 refugees access health screening and other health services.
- 1,700 youth increased school attendance and improved their grade point average
- Received a \$1.5 million grant to improve immigrant access to Job Center services.

- ♦ In partnership with the Courts Administrator and local agencies, trained 338 interpreters to be qualified interpreters to provide legal, health and social service interpretation.
- ♦ Approved more than 1,700 Foreign Labor requests from Wisconsin employers seeking workers due to labor shortages and/or a need for workers with special skills.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- Revise Refugee Cash Assistance to be consistent with W-2.
- ♦ Focus on the diverse needs of new refugees from all over the world who come to Wisconsin. (especially from Eastern Europe and Africa).
- ♦ Help identify alternative funding sources to maintain services and cope with substantial federal funding reductions.
- Expand services to the elderly.
- Develop batterer's treatment services.

Other Employee and Employer Services Administered by DWS

**WETAP Transportation Grant:** Wisconsin DOT/DWD jointly operate this \$8 million grant program to help communities provide worker transportation assistance.

**Wisconsin Job Order System:** Allows employers to enter, change/update, and remove their job orders from JobNet.

**JobRide Reverse Commute Vanpool Program:** Provides vanpool service from Milwaukee central city to suburban employment opportunities.

**Accessible Workstations:** Computers in 25 Job Centers allow access to Internet job search tools such as JobNet by persons with disabilities.

**Older Worker Project:** Provides information and resources for older workers and employers to help them understand how to benefit from this labor pool.

**Entrepreneurial Outreach:** Grants to Job Centers to offer small business startup assistance to low income job seekers. Helped job seekers determine if they are suited for business ownership and, if so, how to begin the process.

**Get Checking Program:** A pilot project to teach low-income people the importance of financial information and help establish connections to bank accounts has been expanded throughout Wisconsin in English, Spanish and Hmong.

**Workplace Based Financial Education Projects**: Employer sponsored Financial Education Programs encompassing budgeting, money management, saving and banking.

**Seasonal Jobs Website:** Allows people to list and search for seasonal job opportunities throughout Wisconsin.



**Tax Credits:** DWS manages state and federal tax credit programs to help employers offset the cost of hiring employees from targeted categories. Programs include Worker Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), Welfare to Work (WtW), Enterprise and Development Zone credits.

**ChildCare Careers Marketing Campaign:** Identified support systems available to help people pursue professional development in childcare.

**Money Smart Corrections Project:** Providing budgeting, money management, credit education and banking classes to Probation and Parolees who owe child support.

**Wisconsin Labor Management Council (WLMC):** The WLMC was established by state legislation in 1987 to promote labor-management cooperation throughout Wisconsin in order to improve Wisconsin's economy. The Council is made up of 21 members appointed by the Governor -- 8 management, 8 labor, and 5 public/non-affiliated. The Council promotes labor-management cooperation through a biennial conference, the last of which was held in February 2002, as well as other educational activities.

#### **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

#### Mission

To obtain, maintain, and improve employment for people with disabilities by working with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) consumers, employers and other partners.

#### DVR's primary services are:

- Guidance and Counseling
- ♦ Finding and Maintaining Employment
- ♦ Assistive Technology
- **♦** Training

#### **Programs**

#### Counseling and Purchase of Services

Almost 200 DVR counselors in more than 76 field offices and/or Job Centers throughout Wisconsin provided vocational counseling, purchased employment and training services and assistive technology to jointly develop and advance an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for more than 20,000 individuals with disabilities each year.

#### Business Leadership Network

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) is a national program, led by employers, that engages the leadership and participation of companies to hire qualified job applicants with disabilities. The BLN offers employers access to a pool of qualified applicants, disability employment information and a network of companies sharing information on disability employment issues.

In Wisconsin, the BLN is a partnership of statewide business leaders, the Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Wisconsin BLN currently has chapters in Milwaukee, Madison, Eau Claire, Green Bay and La Crosse.

#### **Business Enterprise Program**

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) locates, establishes, supervises, and maintains a statewide small business program for eligible people who are visually impaired to operate food service businesses. Typical businesses BEP participants operate include vending machine operations, snack bars, coffee shops, or full-service cafeterias. Sites are located at colleges, industrial sites, and interstate rest stops and in state and federal buildings.

As small business entrepreneurs, licensed program participants manage their operations in a manner similar to a franchise. Upon completion of training followed by continuous guidance from DVR staff, BEP participants perform all of the routine managerial duties necessary to run their business. Participants are "hands on" managers. DVR staff provide support and problem resolution in numerous areas and act as liaisons with facilities management.

#### Pathways to Independence

DVR and the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) have been partners in a five-year demonstration project called "Pathways to Independence." The project was designed to provide people with severe disabilities assurance of long-term health care coupled with intensive vocational rehabilitation.

DVR has completed its agreement with DHFS for the Pathways demonstration project. The final research report is due from DHFS by April, 2004. The findings thus far show evidence of increased work participation and earnings for participants as compared to other DVR consumers who are Social Security benefit recipients.

As a result of this project, DVR has greatly expanded the availability of benefits analysis services to assist consumers in making informed decisions about becoming competitively employed. Wisconsin's Medicaid Purchase Plan (MAPP) was an early spin-off from the DHFS side of the project. The project also tested a SSI waiver that allowed participants to keep more of their cash benefits while working--an effective incentive.

#### **Transition Services**

In partnership with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), DVR works with high school students who are transitioning from high school to post-secondary education. Our joint goal is to work collaboratively with the student and community resources to provide a smooth transition from school to the world of work.

#### Supported Employment

This program works to increase employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities by working with a consumer and an employer to find a job suited to the consumer's specific skills and abilities. DVR collaborates with county partners to provide the longer-term supports that may be required to maintain employment.

#### Windmills Training

This interactive training gives employers and their employees who are not disabled, an opportunity to uncover the stereotypes, myths, biases and fears that create barriers in their attempts to recruit and hire people with disabilities. DVR provides this training to employers at no cost.

#### Accomplishments 2002 - 2003

- ♦ In state fiscal years 2002-2003 DVR met or exceeded all performance standards and indicators issued by the United States Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- DVR staff provided services to thousands of job-seekers with disabilities in Wisconsin.

	SFY 2002	SFY 2003
Successful Rehabilitations	3,893	3,926
Wages per hour of	\$8.77	\$9.37
rehabilitated consumers		
Applicants for services	18,260	17,854

NOTE: During SFY 02 and 03 the demand for DVR services increased significantly. New applicants for services increased from 11,671 during SFY01 to 18,260 in SFY02. Due to this DVR implemented its Order of Selection System during December 2002.

- ◆ DVR staff are located in most of the 76 Wisconsin Job Centers and work closely with our Job Center partners to provide better and more efficient employment services to people with disabilities. Wisconsin continues to be a leader in the provision of employment services to people with disabilities through Job Centers.
- ♦ Changes were made to the Order Of Selection (OOS) process in response to the increased demand for DVR services. These changes have allowed DVR to meet the legal OOS requirements of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and continue to be responsive to the needs of DVR. The DVR OOS process now permits DVR to regularly bring in consumers from the OOS Waiting List and to seamlessly move form one OOS Category to the next as resources allow. Although the waiting list is still substantial, DVR is now able to serve Category 1 consumers within weeks and has reduced the Category 2 consumers form several years to only one year.
- ◆ During the SFY 02-03 biennium DVR and DPI initiated efforts to develop a new Memorandum of Understanding to further improve the availability and quality of vocational rehabilitation services to transition students
- ♦ During the SFY02-03 biennium DVR and the BEP operators worked collaboratively to provide more independence and control over the businesses to the BEP operators.
- ◆ DVR developed a cooperative agreement with the Department of Revenue (DOR) to provide paid Work Experiences opportunities for DVR consumers. Over 70 consumer consumers were hired by DOR each year of the biennium. DVR consumers were instrumental in helping DOR meet its obligation to process state income tax forms. The consumers gain valuable work skills, experience, references and contacts. A number of consumers were hired directly by DOR and others were able to obtain jobs with other employers as a result of the DVR/DOR Work Experience program. The program continues with close to 80 participants during the second year.

◆ The Farm Assessment and Rehabilitation Methods (FARM) Program was implemented. This is a collaborative agreement between DVR and Easter Seals of Wisconsin. The FARM program Rehabilitation Technology assessment and consultation is geared toward DVR consumers who are farmers and DVR staff. The program also provides training to DVR staff on issues related to farmers with disabilities and the farming work environment. Almost 100 percent of the farmers with disabilities served by the program who wished to continue farming have achieved their goal. Staff have gained valuable knowledge, resources and expertise in serving farmers and the complaint rate from farmers has dropped dramatically.

#### Ticket to Work

Wisconsin was one of 13 early implementation states for Ticket to Work. The Ticket to Work program is part of legislation signed into law in 1999, and its goal is to increase choices for Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities in obtaining employment, vocational rehabilitation or other support services from public and private providers.

DVR has implemented a number of procedures to maximize its participation in the Ticket program, and as a result, only the vocational rehabilitation agencies of New York, Michigan and Illinois have had more tickets assigned to them than Wisconsin DVR.

#### **Division of Unemployment Insurance**

#### Mission

Provide employer-funded, temporary, economic assistance to Wisconsin's eligible unemployed workers.

#### **Programs**

- ♦ Manages the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.
- ♦ Collects UI taxes from approximately 120,000 state employers.
- Determines eligibility and pays benefits to claimants under state and federal programs and requirements.
- Assures integrity of benefit payments.
- ♦ Manages the department's labor law clinic program providing employers with information about the laws administered by the department.

#### Accomplishments 2001-2002

- ♦ Distributed more than \$2,050,000,000 in UI benefits to approximately 878,000 claimants over two years.
- Resolved 50,352 appeals of disputed unemployment benefits cases over two years.
- Non monetary determinations totaled 578,658 over this span of time.
- Continued an information technology redesign (SUITES) in Tax and Accounting.
- Approximately 30 labor law clinics were produced annually, with clinics being offered in all areas of the state of Wisconsin and approximately 100 employers attending each clinic.
- ♦ Implement an Internet Claims System.

	2001	2002
Number of Claimants Paid	377,000	501,000
Amount of Benefits Paid	\$850,000,000	\$1,200,000,000

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- SUITES Tax and Accounting IT Redesign will be completed in 2004.
- IT project for Benefits and Legal (ENABLES) began in the fall of 2003.
- Implemented an Internet Weekly Claims System in the fall of 2003.
- ♦ Began a Department of Labor pilot in the fall of 2003 designed to better connect the claimants of UI with DWS services.
- Implements steps to ensure that the UI system is accessible to non-English speaking individuals.
- Develop new approaches to meet increased demand for UI services.
- Implemented a workforce succession initiative in the fall of 2003.
- Efforts to employ a more diverse workforce began in the summer of 2003 and will continue.

- ♦ Encourage customers to utilize the divisions new new, efficient and customer friendly methods of interaction.
- Expand the number of Labor Law clinics in 2004.
- ♦ Improve inter-divisional and inter-departmental relationships to reduce the cost of government while at the same time increase our quality of service to customers.

#### **Workers' Compensation Division**

#### Mission

The Wisconsin Workers' Compensation program is the premier program in the United States and used as a model internationally. Division staff and managers envision the ultimate mission for this prestigious program as:

"the promotion of healthy, safe work environments by maintaining a balanced system of services to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Wisconsin Workers' Compensation Act."

#### **Programs**

Division staff manage the workers' compensation claims program, provide assistance to claimants, set permanent disability ratings for claimants, monitor accuracy and promptness of payments, health cost disputes and return-to-work programs.

Division attorneys conduct formal administrative hearings to resolve disputed claims between claimants and employers.

Division staff also oversee the insurance functions of the workers' compensation program by managing the self-insurers program and the uninsured employers fund, the wrap-up insurance program, and serve as liaison with the Wisconsin Rating Bureau and the Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

#### Accomplishments 2001 - 2003

The Bureau of Insurance Programs reports the Uninsured Employer Fund (UEF) remains strong with a \$9.8 million balance as of 6/30/03. Staff accomplishments from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2003 include:

- ♦ 58,914 Wisconsin employer investigations were completed.
- 3,891 employers were assessed penalties for operating without WC insurance.
- ◆ Penalty assessments of \$3.7 million were collected from illegally uninsured employers.
- New insurance coverage resulted for about 60,000 Wisconsin employees.
- ♦ 140 claims for the UEF were investigated and processed.
- ◆ The UEF paid \$3.0 million to or on behalf of workers injured while working for illegally uninsured employers.
- ♦ An automated tax intercept system was developed to assist in collecting delinquent uninsured employer penalties.
- ◆ The Self-Insured program monitored about 200 private and 50 public self-insured Wisconsin employers.
- Fifteen wrap-up projects were completed. Five new wrap-up projects were approved. Currently there are six wrap-up active projects being monitored.

The Bureau of Claims Management used technology to improve customer service and streamline claims processing. Accomplishments for the Bureau include:

- ♦ Monitoring over 50,000 claims annually for accuracy and prompt payment of over \$250M per year
- ♦ Developing and upgrading an Internet system for submitting required reports and exchanging information on over 500,000 claim reports per year
- ◆ Providing in-person and web-based training assistance to over 400 insurers and their claims adjusters
- ◆ Issuing over \$2.2M per year in special work injury benefits including \$400,000 annually in death benefits to dependents of fatally-injured workers.
- ♦ Developing an improved optical imaging system for better management of several hundred-thousand imaged, hard copy documents

The Bureau of Legal Services has assisted the division in having one of the lowest cost per claim litigation rates in the country as noted by the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau and the Workers' Compensation Research Institute. Staff accomplishments on an annual basis include:

- ♦ Conducted 1,200 formal hearings.
- Issued 8,000 judicial orders to resolve injury claim disputes.
- Processed 6,900 hearing requests.
- Conducted 1,500 pre-hearing and settlement conferences to resolve contested cases.
- Approved 5,100 settlements to resolve contested cases.
- Resolved 2,000 health care service fee and necessity of treatment disputes through alternative dispute resolution.

The division's safety initiative included personal presentations of Governor certificates to Wisconsin Corporate Safety Award winners. A media campaign promoting the division new safety web site was conducted in six major areas and included radio spots and billboards. A safety calendar introducing W. C. Safetee was developed for 2002 and 2003 depicting safety hazards, tips and statistics for workplace injuries in Wisconsin and nationally. In 2003 the safety specialist position was approved and filled. The safety specialist's first achievement was re-establishing the Safety Partnership group.

#### Upcoming Initiatives

- Utilizing additional staff and an alternative dispute-resolution process to reach the six-month goal for holding hearings statewide.
- Automate the Uninsured Employers Fund personal liability assessment process.
- ♦ Develop optical imaging applications for improved storage, retrieval and exchange of electronic images of hard copy documents.
- Expand Internet claim reporting capabilities.
- Improve insurer-compliance with respect to replies to division correspondence.
- ◆ Develop partnerships to launch safety campaign aimed at youth entering the workplace.

#### **Equal Rights Division**

#### Mission

- ◆ To protect the rights of all people in Wisconsin under civil rights and labor standards laws;
- ◆ To achieve compliance through education, outreach, and enforcement by empowered and committed employees;
- To perform responsibilities with reasonableness, efficiency, and fairness.

#### **Programs**

The Equal Rights Division is responsible for enforcing the Fair Employment, Fair Housing, Public Accommodations, Whistleblower laws, and Family and Medical Leave laws in the Bureau of Civil Rights. The Bureau of Labor Standards enforces all of the Labor Standards Laws, including Hours of Work and Overtime, Minimum Wage, Wage Claims, Child Labor, and Plant Closing laws as well as setting and enforcing the Prevailing Wage rates for state building and local and municipal building projects. The division also sets the prevailing wage rates for all state highway construction projects.

The Equal Rights Division is committed to the concept that education will help eliminate discrimination and inadvertent violations of other laws enforced by the division. To help realize that concept, division personnel participate in over 100 presentations and seminars each year.

#### Accomplishments 2002-2003

- ◆ The Equal Rights Division has continued to successfully fulfill its annual contract with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), thus ensuring an increase in source revenue (\$1.1 million in FFY 2003).
- ♦ The Equal Rights Division assumed responsibility for investigation and hearing of cases against the State as an employer.
- ◆ The Equal Rights Division promulgated an emergency rule to allow consistent handling of new responsibilities.
- ♦ The Equal Rights Division revised the Fair Employment complaint form to improve clarity of information at the first stage of the process.

Civil Rights Case Data	SFY02	SFY03
Number of cases received	5,194	4,786
Cases completed	4,395	4,858
Cases sent to Hearing Section	1,173	1,115
Hearing Section decisions appealed to LIRC*	95	115
Decisions appealed to Circuit Court, as well as Family	34	23
Medical Leave Act (FMLA) cases that go directly to court		

\*LIRC: Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission

<b>Equal Employment Opportunity (EEOC) Cases Data</b>	FFY02	FFY03
EEOC cases processed	2,034	2,336
\$\$ paid by EEOC for cases processed	\$1,017,000	\$1,168,000

Labor Standards Case Data	SFY02	SFY03
Unpaid wage complaints received	4,800	4,481
Complaints resolved	4,792	4,333
\$\$ recovered for claimants	\$4,069,549	\$2,429,239
Construction Wage Case Data		
Construction Wage complaints received	115	83
Complaints completed	160	102
Wage Determinations*	1,636	1,675
Owed wages collected	\$452,140	\$168,524

<sup>\*</sup> A wage determination consists of the wage rates, by trade, for a construction project.

#### **Upcoming Initiatives**

- ♦ In August 2003, the Equal Rights Division was successful in the integration of most of the Personnel Commission's responsibilities.
- ♦ The Equal Rights Division is undergoing a systematic review of the state labor standards regulations to include the following within the upcoming biennium:
  - a. Revision and updating the agricultural exemption from state's overtime regulations;
  - b. Revising and updating state's child labor laws;
  - c. Revising and updating the state's minimum wage regulations, pursuant to \$104, Wis. Stats.
- ♦ The division plans to improve the coordination among the other state agencies involved with the prevailing wage laws, such as with the Attorney General and the Department of Transportation.
- ◆ The division plans to analyze the feasibility of developing a web based, prevailing wage survey program.
- ♦ The division is exploring the possibility of obtaining the statutory authority to allow the Department of Workforce Development to issue a ruling requiring all contractors on public works property to provide certified payrolls.
- ♦ To strengthen enforcement, the division is beginning a process of internally cross training its equal rights officers in the area of prevailing wage.
- ♦ The division is currently reducing the length of time it takes to investigate prevailing wage rate cases and improving overall enforcement of state prevailing wage laws.
- ♦ The division has developed internal timelines in an effort of reducing the length of time it takes to investigate a discrimination complaint within the Civil Rights Bureau.



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